

Welcome Aboard!





# TIME TO FIND SOUDA BAY

## CONTENTS

TO  
BAY

1. WELCOME  
SOUADA

BAY

2. NSA SOUDA  
3. HOUSING  
4. LOCAL AREA  
5. ROAD/CAR

WARNINGS

6.

DEFENDENTS

# **WELCOME TO SOUADA BAY, CRETE**

- 1. WHERE IS CRETE?**
- 2. CULTURE**
- 3. LAWS AND RULES  
OF CRETE**
- 4. LANGUAGE**
- 5. CURRENCY**
- 6. WEATHER**

# WHERE IS CRETE?



Crete is located in the east central Mediterranean Sea and is the largest of the Greek islands (162 miles long and 38 miles at its widest point). Crete is the southernmost land mass in Europe and the home of Europe's oldest civilizations. The island consists of rugged mountains interspersed with flat plains and is divided into four regions; Hania, Rethymno, Iraklion, and Lassithi. Its strategic location made Crete a crossroads in ancient times and has been inhabited since 6100 B.C. The most flourishing period occurred between 1600 to 1400 B.C. during the Minoan Empire. The empire, which numbered 100,000 subjects, was mentioned in Homer's epic poem, "The Odyssey." Ruins of one of the significant Minoan palaces, Knossos, is located near Iraklion, the modern day capital of Crete.

In 67 B.C., Crete was occupied by Rome and then fell successively to Constantinople, the Crusaders, the Venetians, and the Turks. After years of occupation, in 1912, Crete elected to become part of Greece. In spite of fierce resistance by the Cretans, the island was occupied by German forces from 1941 to 1945. After Germany's surrender, Cretan forces helped fight the Soviets in northern Greece.

Famous Cretans include: The Renaissance painter El Greco, Nikos Kazantzakis (author of Zorba the Greek), and Eleftherios Venizelos who was prime minister of Greece up to World War II and who brought Greece into the war on the side of the Allies.

# WEATHER

The climate of Crete is considered mild. May to September is generally hot and sunny with very little rain. After a short transition month (October), winter brings rain and occasional snow, associated with frontal systems passing through. Average monthly temperatures range from the low 50's in the winter to the high 80's in the summer.

A complete seabag is necessary for all personnel assigned to NSA Souda Bay. All changes of your uniform will be required for the different seasons. Your civilian dress is the same as in the U.S., but you might want to bring a couple of extra blankets and rugs for the winter.



# LAWS AND RULES OF CRETE

In the U. S. and many other countries, there is a movement to liberalize the use of marijuana and

other so-called "soft drugs". The opposite is true in Crete and throughout Greece.

The government

intends to eradicate all drugs and narcotics. Few Greek people use drugs.

Accordingly, all visitors can

expect more than a fair amount of observation by the local police and undercover drug enforcement people.

It is a crime to produce, to buy, and to take receipt of, to use, or to possess drugs, and to associate with

those who do. If you are involved, you can be expected to be charged on any and all counts.

If you attempt to photograph Greek military equipment, personnel, or installations, expect to have your

camera confiscated, and you may be arrested, charged, and tried for espionage.

The police on the island of Crete do not carry weapons and are highly respected by the local people.

Only traffic cops are in uniform. Most other police are in civilian clothes. They will show their badge if

you are being questioned. In a courtroom, a policeman's statement as a witness often is the single most

important evidence against a defendant. If you are apprehended and asked to accompany a policeman to

the nearest police station, do so in a courteous manner. If an American friend is at the scene of the incident,

ask him or her to contact the security police once you reach the police station, or request that the Greek

police make such a phone call for you. The security police will then notify the international police.

In some countries, a foreign government will return a member of the military to the local U.S. military authorities whenever that member has been accused of a crime against the host nation. Many military members assume that this is a practice that controls every case that arises in every country. This is not true.

Agreements between the United States and Greece determine which government has the primary right to deal with a particular problem. If you become involved in trouble off base, the resolution of that problem may well reside strictly within the Greek legal system. This could be true even if you are charged with drunken driving, reckless driving, or are cited for any traffic accident. It could also apply to drug charges, shouting matches, pushing and shoving incidents, or any other act which the Greek police deem to be illegal or in violation of Greek customs.

While in Greece, make no mention of the Turkish nation. The Greek people have been at odds with neighbors to the east for centuries, and memories of enslavement and persecution are burned deeply into their history. Wear no clothing suggestive of Turkey, such as a fez, or anything bearing the crescent moon. Use discretion in the wearing of patches and pictures which might draw the wrong kind of attention (i.e.. pro-nuclear, finger gestures, etc.).

There is anti-American and anti-NATO sentiment among a small radical minority of the population with movement to oust the American base from Greece. The wisest course of action is to refrain from political or military discussions with the local population because it is too easy to get caught in a heated argument. It is better not to start a potentially disturbing discussion, or to at least leave when the conversation turns to delicate matters, rather than to try to engage in a no win argument. Furthermore, it is best to avoid political rallies of any kind, for they magnify the potential dangers normally associated with a simple, private discussion.

Since the Greek people have been free for about 40 years, the Greek flag has special significance. An individual can be criminally prosecuted for voicing or writing defamatory or provocative comments about the Republic of Greece. Furthermore, a person can be convicted of the same offense for degrading a national symbol. Under no circumstances should a Greek flag ever be desecrated by a foreigner. The same potential charge of desecrating a national symbol also applies to the many Greek churches and shrines that dot the landscape. The Greek people are sensitive to inappropriate clothing in churches. Shorts, short-sleeved shirts or blouses, lack of footwear are not acceptable.



# CULTURE

While in Greece, it is best to remember that we are guests in this country, and that we are here at the invitation of the Greek government. Your stay will be much more enjoyable if you treat this hospitality with all the respect due to a gracious host.

Although the Greeks are usually open and hospitable, there are some with volatile emotions who will not hesitate to let you know when they have been insulted. For this reason, be aware of the following gestures peculiar to this country:

The ultimate insult in Greece is a hand gesture in which the right hand is extended forward and slightly upward from the right shoulder. The palm is open and fingers are fully extended, and the motion resembles one of heaving a shot-put. (This is the equivalent of an American pointing his middle finger skyward.)

Another gesture is made by dropping the right hand from a waist level height and from a position away from the body in a swinging motion to the groin. It can be done by the hand alone or in conjunction with the arm, but both are obscene gestures and can quickly earn you an enemy for life!!

The Greek people are extremely proud of their country and its heritage. The entire history of the Greek people has been one of invasion, occupation, and harsh treatment by the invading forces. Historically, these occupations have been interspersed with relatively short periods of freedom.

The younger men and women normally wear modern western clothing; however, older men and women prefer the more traditional costumes. The traditional men's costume consists of baggy pajamas fastened at the knee and held by a brown sash, black knee boots, a heavy white or black shirt, and a black vest or short jacket. The older women often wear all black clothing. You will see richly-decorated traditional dresses only at weddings, parties, parades, or festivals.

Traditionally, young women in Greece are sheltered and expected to be modest in all their actions. Young Greek men approach them only if they have serious intentions to marry. This message should be clear, any approaches you make towards a young Greek woman could be interpreted as the beginnings of a courting procedure.

An interesting custom that the visitor will soon observe is the coffee house gatherings, where conversation usually concerns sports or politics. The coffee house, or Kafeneo, is the social center for the men of the island. The standard drinks are thick, near-Eastern coffee, Ouzo, which is an anise alcoholic drink tasting much like licorice, (this drink in its pure form is made with Heroin and is off limits!) and raki. Raki is a powerful liquor usually taken in shots as a toast. It is also taken to ward off a cold.

Dance is an important part of the Cretan life. American dances are popular at night clubs, but at the Cretan dance halls, folk dances are performed with gusto and without inhibitions. Guests and visitors are invited to take part in the spirit of the dance by imitating the steps as best they can. Bands use modern guitars and percussion instruments as well as the traditional middle-Eastern bouzouki, mandolin, and violins.

The Greeks are social drinkers only. **Intoxication is socially unacceptable.** Public drunkenness or alcohol-induced behavior, such as rough housing, throwing up, urinating on the streets, must be avoided at all cost. Consumption of alcoholic beverages while walking the streets or on public transportation is an absolute 'NO'!

# LANGUAGE

The language of Crete is Greek with a few variations for the Cretans. However, many local people

speak English. Please remember that you are a guest in this country and you should try to learn some of

our host nations language. We strongly encourage you to learn a few Greek words and phrases while you

are here, and try to use them. Don't be shy; the Greeks will love you for trying, you can be an even better

goodwill ambassador for the United States, and you will enjoy your tour even more. Take the time to visit

the people and observe their customs firsthand. You'll go away with an experience you'll long remember.

A few sample phrases that will help you when you first arrive are:

HELLO: HERETE (formal)

HI: YA (informal)

GOOD MORNING: KALIMERA

GOOD-BYE: ADIO

YES: NE (neh)

NO: OHI (o-shee)

KATALAVENO

PLEASE/YOU'RE WELCOME: PARAKALO

THANKS MUCH: EFHARISTOPOLI

SORRY/EXCUSE ME: SIGNOMI

HOW ARE YOU: TIKANIS

I UNDERSTAND: KATALAVA

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND: THEN

Remember that we, the American service people and our dependents, are guests. A little effort will go

a long way toward making friends! Learning a simple phrase in Greek will demonstrate interest in the

Greek culture.



# CURRENCY

The currency used in Crete is called Drachma. While a lot of places on the island accept U.S. dollars, it

is always best to deal in the Greek currency. That way you don't have figure out the exchange rate.  
You

can get Drachma from PSD and MWR on the base. PSD sells Drachma for the going rate without profit

involved, however, MWR sells Drachma for a profit and you will always get a lower rate at MWR. Most places downtown and across the island will take major credit cards. The biggest difference between the

U.S. and Crete is that they don't take personal checks, so you need to get Drachma before you venture out

in town. There are several places in town to get Drachma but they too are selling it for a profit so you get a

lower rate than PSD, and sometimes even lower than MWR. Personnel are prohibited from acquiring Drachma except from authorized agencies.

The Drachma rate fluctuates like all foreign currencies. The best rate in the past few years has been 318

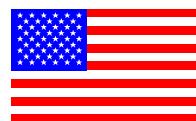
Drachmas for the dollar. The lower the rate, the higher the cost to you. Make sure you keep this in mind

when paying for things you can't get on base.

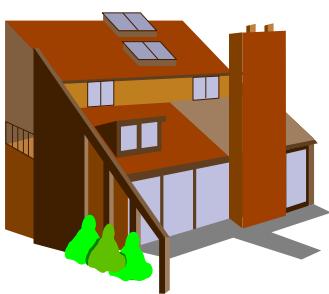
Here is an example of the exchange rate:

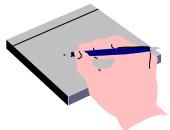
As of April 1999, \$50.00 U.S. dollars will get you 17, 500 drachmae at the rate of 350 per dollar. The rate can fluctuate from summer to winter, so the best thing to do is keep up with current Drachma rate and find the best place to get it.

# **NSA SOUDA BAY**



- 1. HISTORY**
- 2. CONSTRUCTION**
- 3. AMENITIES**
- 4. NECESSITIES**
- 5. TELEPHONES**





# NSA SOUDA BAY

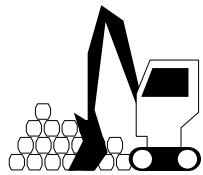
In 1958, the USS TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY (AVB-2) was the single U.S. fleet unit operating locally at Souda Bay, Crete, Greece. This was the first step taken by the United States Navy in supporting forward deployed SIXTH Fleet units from this far Eastern Mediterranean Island.

U.S. Naval Detachment, Souda Bay was commissioned on 28 May 1969. At that time, sixteen personnel, under the command of a First Class Petty Officer, made up the entire complement (01 August 1972). The following department/activities comprised US NAVDET, Souda Bay, Mobile Mine Assembly Group Detachment six, Naval Communication Station, Greece Department, Naval Shore Warfare Task Unit Europe, and Naval Weather Service Environment Detachment.

The mission of the NAVDET was and still is to maintain and operate facilities providing base support for U.S. Naval Forces operating in the Mediterranean, including transient, temporary, and permanently based ships, aircraft, units, detachments, and personnel during normal and contingency operations.

On 01 October 1990, U.S. Naval Detachment, Souda Bay was disestablished and U.S. Naval Support Activity, Souda Bay, Crete, Greece was established.

In December 1990, the Naval Support Activity's mission increased its support of U.S. Air Force and Navy Reconnaissance missions. The Naval Support Activity has approximately 600 personnel as of 1997 due to the increase in mission and port operations. NSA, Souda Bay is located on the Akrotiri peninsula on the island of Crete, 17 kilometers east of Hania. The command is collocated with the 115th Combat Wing of the Hellenic Air Force at Souda Air Base. NSA routinely functions as a Naval Operating Base, Naval Air Station, and Naval Weapons Station. We have a big job to do. And doing these jobs, you'll find Chiefs and First Class Petty Officers filling the responsibilities normally held by commissioned officers at other places, and filling them admirably. You'll see junior officers fulfilling the duties normally held by officers of senior grades. It takes dedicated and professional people to provide the wide range of support assigned. As always we're working to make the N S A better... at Naval Support Activity. Support is our middle name. Many construction projects are currently in progress base wide. With the exception of a few officer designated accompanied positions, all billets are 12 month unaccompanied tours. There are nine permanent commands, a deployed Seabee detachment, and four year round USAF and Navy operational detachments for a total military population of approximately 600 and civilian population of approximately 300.



# CONSTRUCTION

Naval Support Activity has gone through some major changes in recent years.

Currently several construction projects are ongoing. The newest additions to NSA Souda Bay are a new main road, bowling alley, barracks for E-5 and E-6, and a multi-purpose building which houses Navy Federal Credit Union, PSD, Command Career Counselor and the NSA Safety Office.

In the summer the dust settles on everything onbase, and it is best to tread carefully. The winter is a little better about the dust, but in its place is mud. The red clay dirt and mud that you will find all over the island is usually piled high somewhere on the base at any given time.

The construction on the base is working for us and trying to make Naval Support Activity Souda Bay the best in the Mediterranean. Please cooperate in any way that you can, and always abide by the current signs that are posted.



# AMENITIES

NSA Souda Bay is a small base that packs a lot of punch. The base has many amenities that will make your tour here feel like home. While we are not like any other base in the world, NSA Souda Bay does have a lot to offer. The new MWR building has Player's bar where you can enjoy a drink or cappuccino after work, without having to go very far. In the same building you can play darts, video games, slot machines, pool, air hockey, or just sit back and watch your favorite sporting event. Graffiti's is also located in the same building, where you can grab a bite to eat and combine it with everything above. There is also a library with books, magazines and Internet/E-mail for your enjoyment. The club also shows movies on most weeknights.

If you are planning a trip and would like some information, next to Graffiti's are Kriti Info and Spa Tours Travel. Both places have people who will help you with all your adventures. Need to rent some equipment for camping or sports? Well, MWR is located in the gym and is the place to go to!

For all those who like to work out, there is a state of the art gym. It is open Monday - Friday from 0530 - 2100 and on weekends from 0900 - 1800. The gym houses activities from basketball and floor hockey to bowling and badminton. The Olympic size pool is open from April until October. There is also a new softball field and soon there will be a soccer field. The annual Captain's cup tournament consists of many events that use all the resources of the base.

GED, CLEP, and DANTEs tests are available. The University of Maryland offers courses leading to an AA degree. NLDP and routine military schools should be taken prior to arrival since they are not given here.

No matter what you like to do after work, you will find everything you need on NSA Souda Bay.



# NECESSITIES

There are a lot of needs to fill with so many people in a small place and NSA Souda Bay has done a good job filling all those MUSTS.

Branch Medical Clinic Souda Bay provides basic outpatient care. The clinic is staffed by one medical doctor and three independent Duty Corpsmen. Minimum level emergency care is supported with cardiac monitoring, defibrillator, splinting, and suturing capabilities. Persons who are eligible for care include:

1. All *active duty* personnel and reserve personnel on ACDUTRA.
2. Visiting USO personnel
3. In emergency circumstances:
  - a. DOD personnel
  - b. Civil Service
  - c. dependents of active duty personnel
  - d. local U.S. retirees

Those ineligible for care are directed by the Health Benefits Advisor to local civilian providers in all non-emergency cases.

SICKCALL: 0830 - 0930 Monday - Friday

PHYSICAL EXAMS: 0800 Wednesday (for lab work afterwards by appt.)

AFTER HOURS VISITS: Case by case basis. The Clinic offers 24 hour staffing.

The clinic provides basic GYN counseling and diagnosis. Pregnancy testing is available and most contraceptive prescriptions can be filled by the clinic. In cases beyond the scope of basic care, the HBA

directs all eligible members to local OB/GYN providers. All providers are fluent in both English and Greek. Services available include the following:

1. Routine pap smears/examination
2. Mammography
3. Complete diagnostic lab, minor procedures, ultrasound, and contraception

The Greek Diagnostic center in downtown Hania provides support for most lab studies drawn at the clinic.

Radiographs (X-rays) for diagnostic purposes are obtained at the Greek Naval Hospital. Referral for x-rays

must come by way of consultation from the base clinic. The Greek Naval Hospital will not perform x-rays

for non-emergency walk-in problems.

When a medical emergency arises that must be cared for in a U.S. hospital there are medical evacuations.

"Evacs" are arranged by the clinic with the Second Aerovac Squadron in Landstuhl, Germany. Also, many

channel flights enter and leave the base during the week. In less emergency situations (e.g.. consultation

with the U.S. Naval Hospital), these flights are used for transportation. U.S. hospitals used within the European theater are Rota Spain, Sigonella and Naples Italy, and Lanstuhl Germany.

The clinic has a limited stock of pharmaceuticals. Efforts are made to support the medical needs of all active duty personnel. Many common prescriptions are filled at the clinic without difficulty.

Occasionally, a prescription will require a visit to the local civilian pharmacy. However, if you have a recurring prescription, it is a good idea to bring a supply with you.

Orders for eyeglasses can be placed through the clinic. Eye examinations and refractions are performed via

civilian services. A current prescription is needed prior to placing an order.

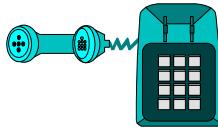
Dental care is not provided at the clinic. Dental support of active duty personnel is supplied via quarterly

visits by Naval Dental teams from NAS Sigonella. Appointments are arranged through the clinic. In emergency circumstances, dental care is provided by the ships in port, local civilian services or the Greek Air Force clinic.



The Greek Naval Hospital, which is used for emergency situations for all active duty personnel, is the most honored hospital because it takes care of the Greek military. When dealing with the people at the Greek hospital you must take great care in your manner and attitude. This hospital is one of the most advanced in Crete, however, it is very spartan by U.S. standards, but you must never insult or berate them for doing things differently. For example, an active duty military member was hospitalized for what appeared to be appendicitis and his dependent was appalled by the conditions and the treatment and showed that disgust, and she was therefore, exiled from the hospital for her rude ways. This dependent would have been justified in the U.S. to question the doctor. But she was not in the U.S. and therefore caused a severe up-roar. In Greece women are considered second class citizens and as such should not question a man, much less a doctor. Please be considerate of the differences between cultures and act accordingly.

Aside from the medical aspects of the base there is a full service post office and galley. There is a make shift chapel that has several different types of services every Sunday. Furthermore, there is a Navy Federal Credit Union however, it does not deal with cash. They can set up an account and DDS. There is an ATM machine onbase in the PSD building. In addition, there are numerous ATM's in town. PSD is the place to go to cash personal (no 2-party) checks. (up to \$1500.00 per week). The Navy Exchange /Commissary also allows you to cash checks up to \$150.00 over the amount of your purchase if they have the cash on hand. Also, the American Red Cross is here for any emergencies that may arise. If your family has any problems while you are here, have them contact their local Red Cross and have a message delivered. Ensure that your family has your pertinent information: name, rank, SSN, unit, location of assignment, and a copy of your travel routing with dates and locations. Emergency assistance is available by contacting the Command Duty Officer, Department Head, or the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society here on base.



# Telephone usage & Handy #'s

This device, more than any other, may take you a long time to get used to using. If you have never been overseas before then you will need to learn how to use a phone all over again. With DSN calls, there is a long delay from the time you say something until the person on the other end hears it, so sometimes both parties are talking at the same. To avoid this, remember the delay.

For personal calls it is recommended that you obtain a calling card. AT&T, Sprint, and MCI are the long distance carriers available here. AT&T phone cards are available for purchase at the NEX. Also, you are allotted a 15 minute morale phone call once a week. These calls are monitored very closely so make sure you inform those that you want to speak to that you could be subjected to criminal prosecution if the calls are over the allotted time.

Here are a few numbers that you might want to keep handy:

DISBURSING: X240/241  
PSD: X422  
MEDICAL: X590  
CHAPLAIN: X539  
BEQ: X260  
NEMOD (FDO): X284  
NEMOD (OIC): X285  
NEMOD (LCPO): X360

LEGAL OFFICE: X203  
NEX: X431  
MWR: X228  
SPA TOURS: X291  
**ANY EMERGENCY: 911**

To call the base from the hotel:  
Dial 66200 and ask operator for the extension you are looking for.



# RENTAL RATES



The biggest consideration in choosing the rent you are willing to pay for the next year should be based on the lowest drachma rate. As mentioned before, your rent will be solely based on the current Drachma rate. The best thing for you to do is to figure that in the high summer the Drachma rate will drop dramatically and you should consider your rent at that exchange rate before entering into a rental contract.

The housing here in Crete is not like in the U.S. You will pay a little less than at home. A one bedroom generally starts around 55,000 Drachma (\$157), a two bedroom is approximately 80,000 (\$228), a three bedroom can run as much as 120,000 (\$342). There are a lot of options. In general the closer the place is to the ocean, the more expensive it will be. But remember, the winters here can be windy and if you live near the water you will feel the chilly effects more than living inland. The price that you choose to pay for an apartment will then become part of your COLA and OHA figures. There are no set prices for apartments

here in Crete, it is solely up to the owner/manager. The Greek authorities and the Navy look upon unpaid bills as a crime and if you try to avoid payment you may be subject to arrest. This is not the U.S. and you must remember we are guests here in this country and you are fully excepted to pay 100% of all the debts you incur prior to your PRD.

The Housing Office conducts twice-weekly "Housing Runs" to show newcomers apartments and houses that are available for rent. These apartments are on the approved housing list. Should you choose to rent an apartment not on the approved list, you are taking your chances on the landlord and the lease, and the Housing Office will not act on your behalf if you have problems. You may also lose your BAH in some cases.

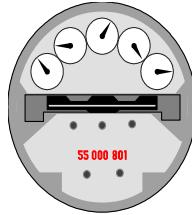
# HEATING & A/C



The bare floors make for a cold winter especially when heating units are not always included in the apartments. When they are put into the apartments you need to find out who controls when they are turned on (i.e. you, the landlord, or another tenant).

There are several kinds of heating units used in Crete: radiator , propane, and electric space heaters. Ensure that at least one of these is included in your new apartment. Many apartments have a fireplace, but their heating capacity is minimal.

Air conditioning is almost non existent on the island. The electrical infrastructure does not support the use of A/C in the summer. If you find an apartment with an A/C make sure you are ready for the electric bills.



# ELECTRIC BILLS

The biggest shock you may get while here in Greece is the cost of the electricity. You must remember that

this country is a few decades behind in technology and things that are usually done at home are not done

the same way here. The electricity here is 220 volts as opposed to U.S. 110 volts. Transformers (supplied

by the housing office) must be used with all 110 volt appliances. Lamps require a 220 volt light bulb.

You get an electricity bill once every 3-4 months and it begins to add up. An electric heater is a very

expensive way to heat your house. All the modern appliances we are used to back home need a converter

here. They may not be very expensive to run individually, but if you put everything together then multiply

it by four months you may have more than you can afford in electricity bills. And some appliances such as

microwave ovens and electric clocks still won't work because Greece uses 50Hz vice 60Hz.

If you rent an apartment, try to get the electricity bill in your name, that way you won't have to pay Greek

tax, which is extremely high. If your bill is 25,000 drachma for three months you will pay an additional

18% of that in tax in addition to the cost for your electricity. You can obtain a tax exemption form from

the base XO only if the electric bill is in your name.

# RENTAL CONTRACTS

CONTRACT  
50,000  
Dramchas



When you rent an apartment you must go through the Housing Office on the base. You will enter into a rental contract with the owner of the apartment. This contract is legal and binding, but many landlords will let you out of your contract if you explain to him/her why. The contract covers all the necessary points when renting: Rent, utilities, and deposit.

Most landlords are very willing to work with you in each area to suit you and your needs. The landlords are often the owners of the property so they have complete control of the rental contracts

Once the rental contract is signed you must return a copy to the Housing Office on base and when you are due to PCS you must make sure you fill out all necessary paper work with the Housing Office and the landlord.

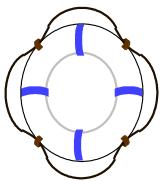
If at anytime you have a problem and can't reach your landlord, contact the Housing Office and they will contact the landlord for you.

The rental contracts spell out when your rent is due and how much it will be for each month (in Drachma). The contract also states what utilities are paid, if any, by the landlord. The deposit is also covered in the rental contract as to when you are to pay the deposit and how much. The deposit on an apartment is usually

one month rent that is applied to your last month's rent. The landlords usually do not take any of the deposit unless you have destroyed something within the apartment.

If you don't have a car, many houses and apartments are located along the route that the base bus service runs. The base bus runs several times a day to and from the base. The times are well coordinated with the normal working hours of most commands onbase.

Good luck house hunting!!



# **LOCAL AREA**

- 1. TOWNS**
- 2. HOT SPOTS**
- 3. BEACHES**
- 4.**  
**SIGHTSEEING**





# TOWNS

The local area has much to offer. There are many places to visit during your tour.

Hania is the largest city near the Akrotiri peninsula. There are several towns that you will become

familiar with during your time here. Stavros is located at the end of the peninsula with the beach just a

short drive from anywhere in Stavros. Horafakia is just inland from Stavros going towards the base or

Hania. Kounoupidiana is a popular place to reside, for it is close to the base, Hania, and the beach.

Kalathas is the most popular place to live because it is very close to the beach and the base peninsula bus

run. Agios Onoufrios is a quiet pleasant place that allows you to relax away from the hustle of daily life.

Kathiana is where the CO's permanent residence is located. This is a nice town with a great Greek culture

to enjoy.

There is usually only one road to and from any town on the island so it is not a difficult road map to learn.

The towns each have a personality of their own and each has something different to offer.

# HOT SPOTS



Whether you want to dance, throw darts, play pool, listen to music, or catch the current flick Crete has everything for you.

The American hangouts on Crete change from year to year with the coming and going of personnel. The current places to go are Mike's Road House for darts, pool, listening to music, or playing video games, El Mundo's for dancing and social gathering, and the Fun Pub which is another watering hole for Americans. However, don't come to Crete just to hang out with Americans. Your experience will be enriched tenfold by interaction with the locals. The ancient Greek culture and customs are fascinating and, taken with an open mind, will teach you much about human behavior and society as a whole.

Other popular destinations include the open air market on Saturday mornings where you will find fresh fruit, vegetables, clothes, shoes, and a multitude of other great bargains. The nearby indoor market is full of fresh fish, meat, cheese, herbs, souvenirs and other locally made goods. Both are great places to see and interact with the true Cretan culture.

There are five movie theaters in Hania, two of which are outdoor. They show a variety of local and American movies (with Greek subtitles). Keep in mind American shows arrive 3-4 months after they are shown in the States.

The harbour area of Hania is extremely popular for tourists and locals alike. There are countless shops, tavernas, cafes, bars, snorkeling tours, and other forms of entertainment for you to choose from. Bring lots of drachmae!

# BEACHES



Crete is famous for its breathtaking beaches. The clear blue skies, pristine shoreline, beautiful grottoes (caves) and unsurpassed blue of the Mediterranean combine to make an unforgettable experience. There are over a half dozen beaches just in the local area of the base. Beach attire ranges from normal swimsuits to optional full nudity. Crete is a popular European holiday destination, so keep in mind Europeans are more open minded than most Americans about their bathing attire (or lack of)! If you are bothered by this custom, there are many other beaches to choose from.

Stavros Beach has a picturesque landscape and is one of the most popular beaches in the area. Most of the Americans here in Crete are in close proximity to this beach. Kalathas has a bar/volleyball net, a restaurant, paddle boating, and a jet ski for rent. Blue Beach is small but has a nice shore line and is away from the crowds, even in the summer. One of the most beautiful beaches is about an hour's drive out of Hania. Seven Mile Beach is a big tourist hot spot. People from all over the globe come to bask in the sun on this strip of beach.

What ever kind of atmosphere you are looking for while you sunbathe or sightsee, the beaches of Crete have it!!



# SIGHTSEEING



Blend right in and become a regular Cretan tourist. There is so much to see and do here on Crete. You can

climb the Samaria Gorge (summer time only), soak up the beaches, visit the monasteries that dot the landscape, see old graves, or even visit the oldest known civilization in Europe.

The best way to see Crete is to take it slow and know where you want to go and what you want to see. Spa Tours at MWR has several trips every month that you can go on for a small fee. There is a glass factory where you can watch glass being blown the old fashioned way, or you can venture through caves that have long since been deserted. Old military forts are a big attraction and the different villages that have been around for hundreds of years.

There are other islands in the area to visit and you can also take a ferry ride, over night, to see Athens on the mainland. Most of the islands of the Aegean are easy (and inexpensive) to get to via ferry from Souda

or Iraklion. Two of the most famous Greek isles are Santorini and Mykonos. It is not recommended that you visit Cyprus due to all the political strife between Greece and Turkey, but you have a great many other places to choose from. Also, from time to time (mostly in summer), MWR offers weekend trips to many of these islands.

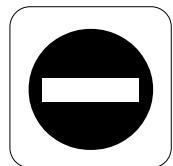
Always remember when you travel to have plenty of money (you can't cash checks anywhere except the base) and try to remember that this is an elevated threat area so do not wear your uniform off the base and wear no U.S. Armed Forces logos/patches.

You will enjoy the sights of Crete when you experience them. Don't be shy, just get out there and enjoy yourself.



# ROAD/CAR WARNINGS

1. ROAD CONDITIONS
2. BRINGING VS. BUYING A CAR
3. GAS, MAINTENANCE, AND INSURANCE



# ROAD CONDITIONS



DON'T DRINK AND  
DRIVE!!!



This part of your Cretan experience may not be the most exciting, but you need to read this section in its entirety before deciding about a car. The first thing you need to know about are the roads here on Crete.

The roads here on the island are perhaps nothing like you have ever seen before. The roads have only been paved for the past 5, maybe 7 years. They are paved with tar and asphalt, but they have marble added to the mixture which makes the roads very slippery when wet. The roads are also paved very poorly, compared to U.S. standards. Not all roads are paved and you will realize that it doesn't matter to the Cretan people if they are or not. The most dangerous aspect of the Greek roads is that they are so narrow and winding.

The roads are very narrow all over the island. A road in the U.S. that is used for one way traffic is the 'normal' width for a two or four lane road here on Crete. It takes a while to get used to driving in such close proximity to another car going in the opposite direction, but you learn to hone your skills. Once you have mastered driving in downtown you can go home and drive in the Demolition Derby without ever being touched.

You must obtain your USAFE license as soon as possible after your arrival. Security gives a 1/2 hour class every Monday. The most important thing to remember is: don't drink and drive. And if you do drink, call a CAB!

Be safe on the roads in Crete. Greece has the highest accident rate in all of Europe. A great deal of the accidents are due to drinking and driving or speeding. If you value your life and those around you, adhere to these rules. Be extremely careful with rental cars and their insurance policies. Only the renter is insured to drive the car. Lend a rental car to NOBODY!!!

# **Buying -vs- Bringing a Car**

This is a very important decision you must make prior to your arrival here in Crete. The option of bringing your car is entirely yours, but please continue to read to be more informed about the pros and cons of this decision. The transportation of your car from the East coast takes approximately 6 weeks. It will arrive on Crete on the ferry down in Souda which comes from Athens. The customs cost on your car in Greece is about \$20.00. If your car arrives prior to your arrival be prepared to pay a storage fee cost to the customs office.

The road conditions and the number of accidents here in Greece may persuade you not to bring your car, here are a few more reasons why it is better to buy an island beater rather than bringing yours.

The cars in the U.S. are generally larger in size than those here, and for that reason it is a bit risky to bring a larger car anyway. If you have a small car (by that we mean a U.S. size compact) the rocky road conditions here will wreak havoc on your front suspension and the shocks. The replacement parts for most cars are not

available here and can only be ordered through the Exchange if they have the parts in stock in Naples, Italy. Some repair places here in Crete can fix basics and some do extensive work on certain cars. The majority of cars on Crete are compact or smaller. If you decide to bring your own car then make sure it has

a full tune up and all the extra parts you think you may need while on your tour. PRIOR TO SHIPPING YOUR CAR STRIP IT OF ANYTHING YOU CAN TAKE OFF i.e. CAR SEAT COVERS, ANTENNA, PULL OUT RADIOS, CAR COVERS, AND REAR VIEW MIRRORS. Send all this stuff out in your pack out, so that it doesn't get stolen in transition.

**If you decide to buy a car here, it may take you awhile to find one that is for sale. Local taxes make**

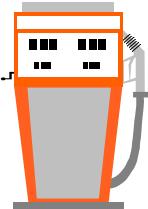
**buying a car on the economy prohibitive. Therefore nearly everyone buys cars only from Americans**

**on base. Most people do not give up their car until the day they PCS. The cars can run from \$500.00**

**to \$3,000.00. You can find advertisements in the Post Office and the NEX, however most cars are sold by "word of mouth". The majority of cars sold here are standard; automatics are few and far between.**

The shipment of motorcycles, mopeds, and minibikes to Greece is allowed. However, you must ship them as POV. The Greek government carefully screens all unaccompanied baggage shipments prior to giving customs clearance, therefore you may not ship motor bikes in your unaccompanied baggage. You must complete the motorcycle training safety course prior to your arrival. You can only have one POV shipped to and from Crete.

# Gas, Maintenance & Insurance



Unleaded gasoline in Greece is as common as in the U.S. however, it is much more expensive. The gas  
on

base is bought with gas ration coupons purchased at the Exchange for about \$20.00 per book. The price  
you end up paying is about \$1.04 per gallon, but on the local economy it about \$4.25 per gallon. There  
is

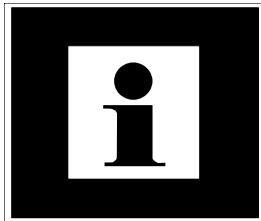
no need to take your catalytic converter off your car. It is highly recommended that you use some sort  
of

octane booster every time you fill your tank. The octane of the gas sold on base is 87.

The general maintenance on your car can be done by the people at the transportation office on an  
appointment basis only. This is not an all the time event so you want to make sure you bring everything  
you may need for the next year. Tires are not difficult to obtain here, but you may want to bring  
belts, lights, windshield wiper replacements, hoses, filters, and a tune up kit. Automatic transmissions,  
power brakes, and power steering are not common in Crete so you may want to bring all the fluids you  
are  
going to need.

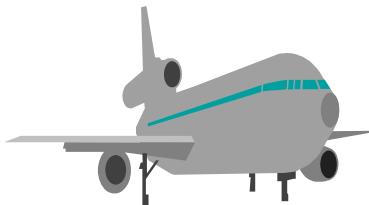
Insurance in Greece is mandatory and is relatively inexpensive. American insurance is available through  
a Geico rep onbase at a MUCH higher cost. USAA is also now available to enlisted personnel, and  
although it is reasonable, it is also much more costly than Greek insurance. You can save some money  
with a "Good Driver Discount" also. Seat belts are mandatory in all cars here in Crete. The local people  
do not usually use them and you will see an entire family of four on a moped, but you must utilize your  
seat  
belts at all times. A fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, and reflective triangle are also mandatory prior to  
vehicle inspection. These are available at the Navy Exchange.

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**



- 1. PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL**
- 2. ENTERING THE COUNTRY**
- 3. ABOARD NSA SOUDA BAY**

# Prior To Arrival



Your overseas screening must be completed and you must be cleared within 30 days of receipt of your new orders. You should make sure all your shots are up to date and that any medication that you need is ordered and you have a three month supply prior to your departure.

Passports/visas are not required as you can travel on military orders. However, due to political considerations, it is best for American military to travel with a low profile. If you can obtain a civilian passport to travel to Greece, it is recommended. This way you can avoid being recognized as military. However, if you're stopped by officials, do not lie or try to hide your military status. Be courteous and professional as a representative of the United States.

Most travel into Greece is via commercial airlines through Athens, Greece. Once in Athens you must clear customs, pick up your baggage. It is a good idea at this point to buy some drachmae at one of the money exchange counters. You will need to go from the International airport you arrived in, to the domestic airport where you will catch your plane to Hania. You can accomplish this via cab (about \$7.00) or bus (about \$1.00) and the trip is about 10 minutes. On arrival at the Hania Airport in Crete if you are not met by your sponsor, most of the taxi drivers understand English. Tell them that you want to go to the American base in Mouzouras, about a \$5.00 cab ride, or call NEMOD. The number is 66200 ext. 1284/1360. Should you be traveling AMC aircraft you will terminate in Sigonella, Italy where you must wait for a flight to Souda Bay. Terminal personnel in Sigonella will help you with flight information. You should anticipate a three or four day delay in actual arrival to Souda Bay once in the European theater when traveling AMC, so account for that in your travel plans.

Remember to keep all receipts for your expenses while in transit. This includes the receipt for when you change \$ to Drachmae. This will all be necessary for your travel claim once you report.

# ENTERING THE COUNTRY



Upon entering Greece you will go through customs. For customs/immigration your orders and military ID card will be required. Civilians must have their passports/visas stamped on arrival and departure from Greece. All military members and their dependents are authorized free entry (no customs duty levied) into Greece for all personal property for use by their family, for the duration of their stay in Greece.

However, should any item be sold within Greece to a person not having the free privilege, then the duty must be paid. All personnel are informed of the regulations concerning sale of goods upon arrival. Personnel serving in Greece are not subject to any Greek taxation on their earnings.

When you land in Greece you may be surprised by the aggressiveness of the people. They do not intend to be pushy or rude, but it may appear that way to you. The best thing you can do is to be assertive and stand up for your position in line, a cab or whatever else may come up. Prepare yourself for the lifestyle change. One small hint: women in the military are treated no differently than any woman. In the Greek culture, a woman is a second class citizen, so American women must be assertive but tactful. Try to remember that a forceful woman is not something these people are used to. These values and customs may

be vastly different than your own, but remember you are in their country. Greece, in particular Crete, is one

of the oldest civilizations known to mankind, and the traditions have been millions of years in the making. Even though their customs are different, you can live in harmony with a little tact, respect and open-mindedness.



# ABOARD NSA SOUDA BAY

As soon as you arrive at Hania airport you should be met by your sponsor. Your sponsor should have the routine you will follow for the next several days. Transient quarters on NSA Souda Bay are very limited.

Upon check-in, Billeting Office personnel will make billeting arrangements for you at BEQ/BOQ. If billeting is full, then the Billeting Office will arrange for you to stay at one of the local hotels. Keep in mind, if you stay at a hotel, you will receive TLA (Temporary Living Allowance). Initially you will be required to pay hotel costs (room and food) out of pocket. This will be reimbursed by the Navy via Direct

Deposit. Most of the local hotels take credit cards, U.S. dollars, and Drachmae. Please consider this when planning your travel money. In most cases, personnel E-6 and below will move directly into the BEQ.

E-7

and above will be in the hotel until they find a place to live in town, or move into the barracks.

Once you are settled either in the hotel or barracks, you will begin your check-in process, which is the same here as most places. Then you will be scheduled for a three day Base Indoctrination class. This class

will fill you in on everything you need to know. You will also go on a cultural and sightseeing tour of Hania. round. Other topics covered in Base Indoctrination are Greek customs, base mission and operations, and Navy Rights and Responsibilities.

No reference in conversation to the presence or absence of American or Allied nuclear weapons in any country will be made. It is the policy of the United States government to neither confirm nor deny the presence or absence of nuclear weapons, or components in any county, or on any ship, station, or aircraft.

Some leftist news papers provide the Greeks with a distorted view of Americans. It is important for you to remember that you can either prove them right or demonstrate that they are wrong.

The U.S. and all its personnel are guests in this country at the discretion of the government. Do not allow yourself to get into a position in which the delicate balance of harmony that now exists is compromised.

Make your country proud and serve with pride in your position in this beautiful country.